

REMARKS

The Applicants respectfully request further examination and consideration in view of the and arguments set forth fully below. Claims 1-11 and 13-20 were previously pending in this application. Within the Office Action, Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9-11, 13 and 15-20 were rejected and Claims 3, 8 and 14 were objected to. Claims 1, 6, and 15 have been amended. Accordingly, Claims 1-11 and 13-20 are pending in this application. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the remarks below.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a)

Claims 1-2, 5-7, 13, 15 and 18-20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ito (U.S. Pat. No. 6,203,344). Specifically, it is stated that "Regarding claims 1, 6 and 20, Ito discloses a headphone support element for securing a headphone connector to a headphone connector interface of an electronic device (1), said element comprising: a circular plug (112) and a jack (22) for operatively receiving the plug (Fig. 1), wherein the headphone support element has a first receptacle (25) for operatively engaging and fixedly securing the headphone connector as claimed." The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Ito discloses a headphone connector having two spaced apart plugs, one of which is circular. When connected to a headphone connector interface, because the plugs are spaced apart, it is impossible for there to be rotation about the circular plug. In Ito, the paired nature of the two spaced apart plugs itself inherently prevents the cord from rotating when plugged into the headphone connector interface.

The Ito headphone is for a recording and reproducing apparatus 1 having a headphone connector interface 26 that can accommodate two different types of plugs, either a remote controller plug 110 or a data communication plug 210. The headphone connector interface 26 has a case block that is furnished with a headphone jack 22 and a data connector 25 exposed on the apparatus 1. The headphone jack 22 and the data connector 25 are formed in an integral structure. Both the remote controller plug 110 and the data communication plug 210 have plug bodies 111, 211 furnished with a circular headphone plug 112, 212 and a substantially rectangular connector 113, 213. The headphone plug is connectable to the headphone jack 22 and the connector is connectable to the data connector 25, which collectively are formed in an integral unit. Ito does not disclose a headphone connector interface having a receptacle for securing only one single plug, which is circular. Instead, Ito discloses a headphone connector

interface for securing an integrated unit of a plug and a connector. Due to the integrated nature of the headphone plug 112, 212 and the connector 113, 313, the problem solved by the present invention is not even present in Ito.

The present invention is directed to a headphone support element that is coupled with a headphone connector interface of an electronic device. When the headphone connector is connected to the headphone connector interface, the headphone support element engages and secures the headphone connector having one and only one circular plug. When secured to the headphone support element, the circular headphone connector is unable to move or rotate about the headphone connector interface. The headphone support element is preferably coupled to the headphone connector interface by an adhesive. Alternatively, however, the headphone support element can be integrally formed within the electronic device.

In contrast to the teachings of Ito, the present invention discloses a headphone connector interface having a receptacle for securing one and only one plug, which is circular. There is no hint, teaching or suggestion in Ito that the headphone connector interface 26 effectively prevents one singular plug, which is circular, from rotating about the jack when the plug is connected.

The amended independent Claim 1 is directed to a headphone support element for securing a headphone connector having one single plug to a headphone connector interface of an electronic device, wherein the one singular plug is circular. The plug has a corresponding jack wherein the plug is inserted into the jack. The headphone support element is coupled with the headphone connector interface. The headphone support element has a first receptacle for engaging and securing the plug of the headphone connector. The headphone connector cannot move or rotate when connected to the headphone connector interface. As mentioned above, Ito does not disclose a jack having a receptacle for securing one single plug, which is circular. Ito discloses a jack for securing an integral unit of two spaced apart plugs. For at least these reasons, the independent Claim 1 is allowable over the teachings of Ito.

Claims 2 and 5 are dependent upon the independent Claim 1. As discussed above, the independent Claim 1 is allowable over the teachings of Ito. Accordingly, Claims 2 and 5 are also allowable as being dependent upon an allowable base claim.

The amended independent Claim 6 is directed to an electronic device having a headphone connector interface for accepting a corresponding headphone connector, wherein the one singular plug is circular, the electronic device comprising: a headphone support element coupled with the headphone connector interface, the headphone support element having a first receptacle for engaging and securing the headphone connector within, the headphone support element having a

first side and a second side, wherein the headphone connector cannot move or rotate when connected to the headphone connector interface. As mentioned above, Ito does not disclose a jack having a receptacle for securing one single plug, which is circular. Ito discloses a jack for securing an integral unit of two spaced apart plugs. For at least these reasons, the independent Claim 6 is allowable over the teachings of Ito.

Claims 7 and 19 are dependent upon the independent Claim 6. As discussed above, the independent Claim 6 is allowable over the teachings of Ito. Accordingly, Claims 7 and 19 are also allowable as being dependent upon an allowable base claim.

The amended independent Claim 15 is directed to a method of securing a headphone connector, wherein the one singular plug is circular, to a corresponding headphone connector interface. The method comprises the steps of providing a headphone support element; and coupling the headphone support element to the headphone connector interface, wherein the headphone support element includes a first receptacle for engaging and securing one single plug of the headphone connector, which is circular, to the headphone connector interface. Such coupling thereby prevents the headphone connector from moving or rotating when connected to the headphone connector interface. As mentioned above, Ito does not disclose a jack having a receptacle for securing one single plug, which is circular. Ito discloses a jack for securing an integral unit of two spaced apart plugs. For at least these reasons, the independent Claim 15 is allowable over the teachings of Ito.

Claims 13 and 18 are dependent upon the independent Claim 15. As discussed above, the independent Claim 15 is allowable over the teachings of Ito. Accordingly, Claims 13 and 18 are also allowable as being dependent upon an allowable base claim.

The amended independent Claim 20 is directed to a system for coupling a remote device having a single male plug, wherein the singular male plug is circular, to an electronic device having a corresponding circular female jack, wherein the remote device is electrically coupled to the electronic device by inserting the male plug into the female jack, the system comprising a support element mounted to the electronic device such that the support element mechanically engages the male plug and prevents the male plug from rotating relative to the female jack. As mentioned above, Ito does not disclose a jack having a receptacle for securing one single plug, which is circular. Ito discloses a jack for securing an integral unit of two spaced apart plugs. For at least these reasons, the independent Claim 20 is allowable over the teachings of Ito.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 4, 9-11 and 16-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hagopian (U.S. Pat. No. 3,375,333). The Applicants respectfully disagree.

Claim 4 depends upon the independent Claim 1. As discussed above, the independent Claim 1 is allowable over the teachings of Ito. Accordingly, Claim 4 is also allowable as being dependent upon an allowable base claim.

Claims 9-11 depend upon the independent Claim 6. As discussed above, the independent Claim 6 is allowable over the teachings of Ito. Accordingly, Claims 9-11 are also allowable as being dependent upon an allowable base claim.

Claims 16 and 17 depend upon the independent Claim 15. As discussed above, the independent Claim 15 is allowable over the teachings of Ito. Accordingly, Claims 16 and 17 are also allowable as being dependent upon an allowable base claim.

Claim Objections

Claims 3, 8 and 14 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 3 depends upon the independent Claim 1. As discussed above, the independent Claim 1 is allowable over the teachings of Ito. Accordingly, Claim 3 is also allowable as being dependent upon an allowable base claim.

Claim 8 depends upon the independent Claim 6. As discussed above, the independent Claim 6 is allowable over the teachings of Ito. Accordingly, Claim 8 is also allowable as being dependent upon an allowable base claim.

Claim 14 depends upon the independent Claim 15. As discussed above, the independent Claim 15 is allowable over the teachings of Ito. Accordingly, Claim 14 is also allowable as being dependent upon an allowable base claim.

For the reasons given above, the Applicants respectfully submit that the Claims 1-11 and 13-20 are in a condition for allowance, and allowance at an early date would be appreciated. Should the Examiner have any questions or comments, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned at (408) 530-9700 to discuss the same so that any outstanding issues can be expeditiously resolved.

Respectfully submitted,
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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING (37 CFR § 1.8(a))

I hereby certify that this paper (along with any referred to as being attached or enclosed) is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service on the date shown below with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to the: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

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Date: 6-16-05 By: Thomas B. Haverstock